

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1                   1.     A method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in  
2 bulk, the method comprising:  
3                   receiving a first electronic and a second electronic submission;  
4                   extracting a first portion from the first electronic submission and a second  
5 portion from the second electronic submission;  
6                   determining a first code for the first portion and a second code for the  
7 second portion, wherein the first code is indicative of the first portion and the second code  
8 is indicative of the second portion;  
9                   comparing the first code to the second code; and  
10                  filtering the second electronic submission in response to comparing the  
11 first code to the second code.

1                   2.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the filtering of the second electronic submission  
3 comprises storing the second electronic submission in a bulk mail folder.

1                   3.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the first portion is extracted from visible text in the  
3 first electronic submission.

1                   4.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, the method further comprising:  
3                   modifying a count in response to the comparing of the first code with the  
4 second code;  
5                   determining if the count reaches a threshold;  
6                   comparing a third code associated with a third message; and  
7                   filtering the third message if the third code matches the second code.

1                   5.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the first portion is related the first code by one of a  
3 hash function, a checksum and a cyclic redundancy check (CRC).

6. The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein each of the first and second codes is represented in less bits than a corresponding portion.

7. The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the first and second electronic submissions are chosen from the group consisting of an electronic mail message, a chat room comment, an instant message, a newsgroup posting, an electronic forum posting, a message board posting, and a classified advertisement.

8. A method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in bulk, the method comprising:

- receiving a first electronic submission;
- extracting a first portion from the first electronic submission;
- determining at least a first code for the first portion, wherein the first code is indicative of the first portion;
- receiving a second electronic submission;
- extracting a second portion from the second electronic submission;
- determining at least a second code for the second portion, wherein the second code is indicative of the second portion;
- comparing the first code with the second code;
- modifying a count in response to the comparing of the first code with the second code;
- determining if the count reaches a threshold; and
- filtering subsequent electronic submissions similar to the first electronic submission in response to determining if the count reaches the threshold.

9. The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the filtering subsequent electronic submissions comprises storing the subsequent electronic submissions in a bulk mail folder.

10. The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the first and second codes are each a number represented in a same number of bits.

1 11. The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the first portion is related the first code by one of a  
3 hash function, a checksum and a cyclic redundancy check (CRC).

1 12. The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein each of the first and second codes is represented in less  
3 bits than a corresponding portion.

1 13. The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the first and second electronic submissions are chosen  
3 from the group consisting of an electronic mail message, a chat room comment, an instant  
4 message, a newsgroup posting, an electronic forum posting, a message board posting, and  
5 a classified advertisement.

1 14. A method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in  
2 bulk, the method comprising:  
3 receiving a first electronic submission;  
4 extracting a first plurality of portions from the first electronic submission;  
5 determining a first plurality of codes for the first plurality of portions,  
6 wherein each of the first plurality of codes is indicative of its respective portion;  
7 receiving a second electronic submission;  
8 extracting a second plurality of portions from the second electronic  
9 submission;  
10 determining a second plurality of codes for the second plurality of  
11 portions, wherein each of the second plurality of codes is indicative of its respective  
12 portion;  
13 comparing the first plurality of codes with the second plurality of codes;  
14 modifying a count in response to the comparing of the first plurality of  
15 codes with the second plurality of codes;  
16 determining if the count reaches a threshold; and  
17 filtering similar electronic submissions in response to determining if the  
18 count reaches the threshold.

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1                   15.    The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein the filtering similar electronic submissions comprises  
3 storing the similar electronic submissions in a bulk mail folder.

1                   16.    The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein the comparing the first plurality of codes with a  
3 second plurality of codes comprises determining if a percentage of the first plurality of  
4 codes exactly matches one of the second plurality of codes.

1                   17.    The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein each of the first plurality of portions is respectively  
3 related to its code by one of a hash function, a checksum and a cyclic redundancy check  
4 (CRC).

1                   18.    The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein the first and second electronic submissions are  
3 chosen from the group consisting of an electronic mail message, a chat room comment, an  
4 instant message, a newsgroup posting, an electronic forum posting, a message board  
5 posting, and a classified advertisement.

1                   19.    The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein the codes are each a number represented in a same  
3 number of bits.

1                   20.    The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 15, wherein each codes is represented in less bits than a  
3 corresponding portion.